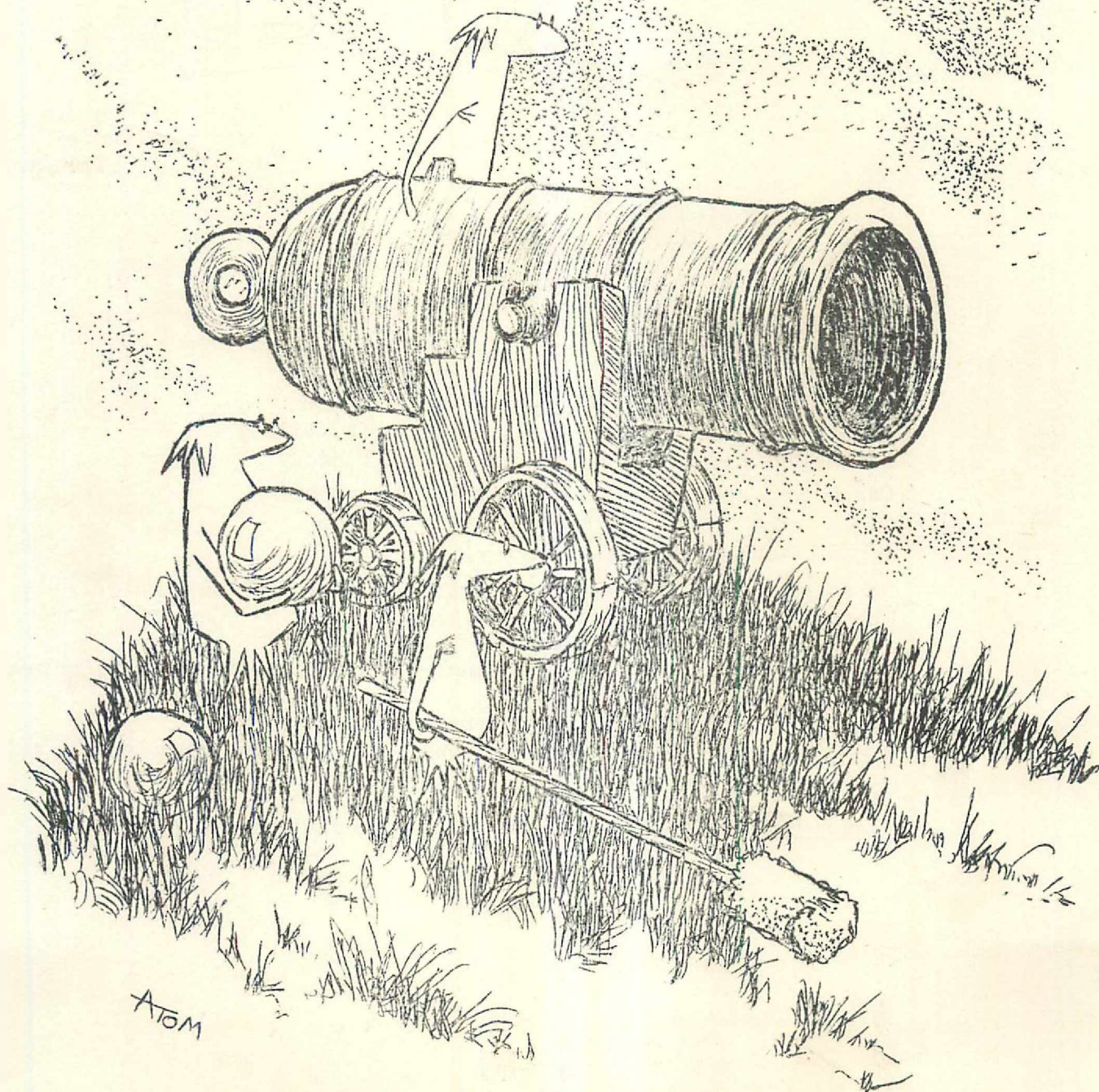


scottish



SCOTTISHE

No. 26

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by

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WITCH SWITH

by DON GELDART

The time is in the future, the scene is the kitchen of the Parker Penitentiary. In the centre of the stage is a large gas cooker, on the cooker is a large black cauldron, which is emitting steam and making boiling sounds. To one side of the cooker there is a table, to the other side there is a sink.

Enter three femme fan witches carrying polythene bags containing the things mentioned in the following dialogue. Clap of tartan thunder.

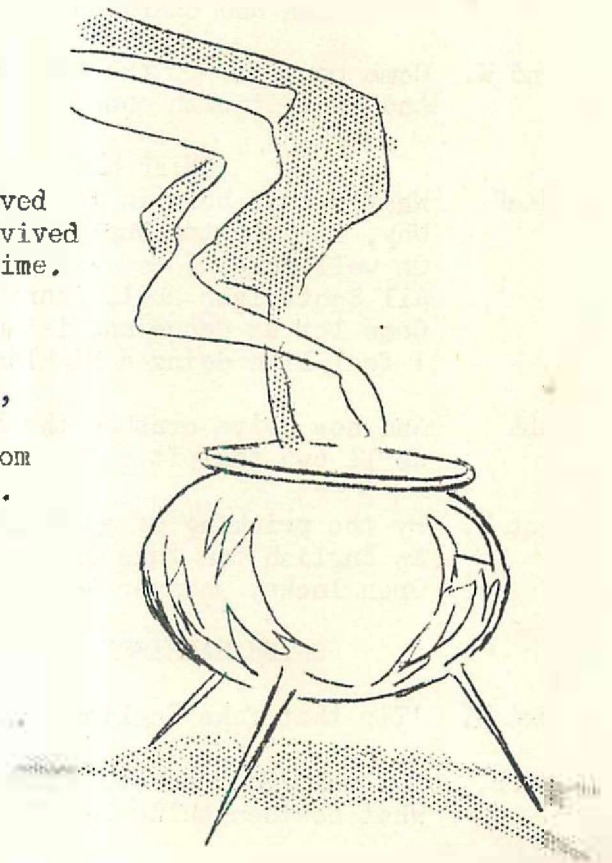
1st Witch.....Betty Peters
2nd Witch.....Ethel Lindsay
3rd Witch.....Ella Parker
MacPatrizio.....Joe Patrizio

1st W. Thrice a coloured Hyphen hath arrived
2nd W. Thrice and once the English fen revived
3rd W. St.Andrew cries, 'tis time, 'tis time.

1st W. Round about the cauldron go
In the fake fen's entrails throw,
Fan, that they did once call Locke,
Refused to let me call him Jock.
Thought the English still ran fandum
In with his head. Oh! wild abandon.

ALL. Double, double toil and trouble
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

2nd W. Fillet from that sercon Groves,
In between two shortbread loaves,
Lights of Burgess, in they go
No more roving to and fro.
No more toast in Ella's bed,
For at last we've got him. Dead!
In the pot with all the lot,
We'll teach them to respect a Scot.



ALL, Double, double toil and trouble,
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

3rd W. Scard, that from Bennett I did drag
No more will he cheat at Brag
Now in with Pat Kearney's liver,
He was a most reluctant giver.
Off with the feet of K and I Potter,
Adding her toenails should make it much hotter.
Geldart's tongue made sly remarks,
In with it, feed him to the sharks.
Chris's brain, to add some seasoning,
Now he's lost his powers of reasoning.
We've left Bruce Burn until the last,
He was their leader in the past,
"Keep fandon English" was his cry
For this good cause did they all die.
An Atom hem to make it thick
And a drop of Blogg to make it stick.

ALL Double, double toil and trouble,
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

2nd W. Come pour it out the time is due,
And cool it with some Liverpool brew. (They pour out the brew into the
sink)

ENTER MACPATRIZIO.

MacP What's this here in the sink?
Why, it's tartan duplicating ink.
Oh well done, I commend your pains,
All Scots fans shall share the gains.
Come let us dance and let us sing,
I feel like doing a Highland Fling!

ALL And now we've crushed the English lion.
We'll awa tae pit oot a wee Orion.

1st W. By the pricking of my thumbs,
An English fan this way comes.
Open locks, whoever knocks.

ENTER HARRISON. Blast of celestial trumpets.

3rd W. 'Tis that fake Englishman..Harrison!

Harr. How now, you secret, black and midnight hags.
What heathen thing is this you do?

ALL Look yonder in the sink
'Tis tartan duplicating ink
So get you gone to Irish fandom,
For we are now, THE SCOTTISH SCIENCE FICTION CLUB OF LONDON.

Harr. Hud yer wheesht, for just awhile
And wipe away that joyous smile,
I'll add another drop of Blogg,
See - the colour starts to unclog,
And now it's British through and through

ALL Look! He's made it all Red, White and Blue!

MACP AND THE THREE WITCHES DISAPPEAR IN A PUFF OF SMOKE

HARRISON conducts a choir of the risen English members of the SFCoL.....
sung to the tune of RULE BRITANNIA.....

There'll always be an England
And Fandom shall be free
If Fandom means as much to you - as Fandom means to me.."

CHEERS FROM THE AUDIENCE.

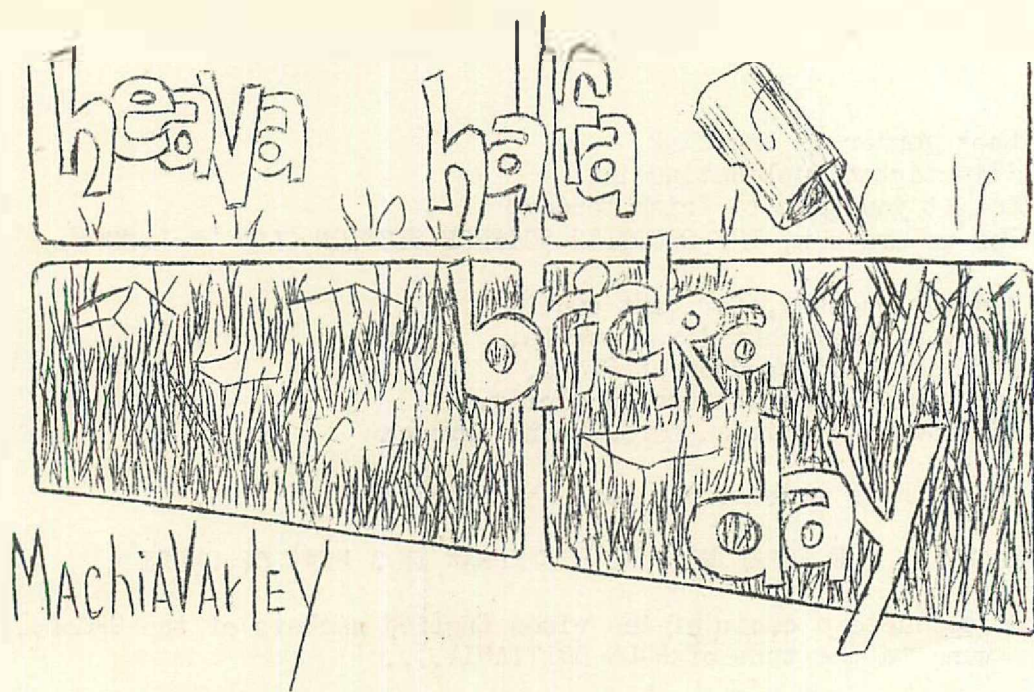
end.

Don Geldart.

Some time ago I offered a prize of ten shillings for the best sketch produced by a club member which could be put on at next years convention. To date Don is the only one who has presented me with a sketch.(Don has COURAGE!) The general opinion of the club was that this sketch appeared to be a wee bit too esoteric for presentation to a general audience. The ingenuity of the club was focussed for a time on the task of producing a clap of tartan thunder. I think they could have licked that one: but they all paled at the thought of trying to make the witches disappear. I believe they had the uneasy feeling, that maybe we were witches.

So I decided to publish this sketch in SCOT: that its author's genius might not go unsung; confident that all my readers would understand the many esoteric references. Well, I should hope so anyway: you don't really want me to explain about Burgess's Lights do you?

PS: The ten shillings award still goes unclaimed.



It is a disturbing thing to find a grave in your back garden; right under the dining-room window, and that's what we found. A mound, six foot long and two feet high, lacking only a headstone and a bit of engraving to complete the picture. This was immediately christened Jenkin's Grave after the previous owner, a refined and intellectual person with the manners and breeding of a hungry vulture.

A few weeks after taking possession of the manse we decided to dig up the grave, partly from aesthetic feelings, but mainly from curiosity. The jokes about Jenkin's Grave had ceased to be wholly ridiculous, there might, after all, be a body there. This led to a sharp dispute as to what we should do if there was a body. Inform the police and let justice take its course, or, on the grounds that rotting flesh makes good fertiliser, dig the carcase in for a flower bed.

Eventually the argument was suspended until such time as we had a solid (or should I say decomposing) basis for arguing on. Sensation-wise the digging was most disappointing, not a cadaver to be found, but it did produce an alarming amount of weird objects. Early on we resurrected the pendulum of a grandfather clock, sufficient matching tiles to make a fireplace surround and enough pieces of wire, springs, valves and sprockets to reconstruct a twenty-horse power internal combustion engine. Underneath this lot we discovered two perfect chimney pots, a large assortment of bricks and a quantity of roofing tiles. I began to seriously consider the possibility of another house beneath ours. This idea was short-lived however, as our next discovery was a shirt and a collection of saw blades. Macabre visions of a midnight butchering raced through the imagination. The corpse, still modestly wearing its shirt, dragged out into the garden to be sawed up into manageable portions. For what purpose? Ease of disposal or, maybe, Irish Stew and rump steak for dinner.

I am pleased to say that, if anything, it must have been the latter, for we discovered no hacked up body. Anyway by the time we had finished we had a monumental pile of debris to dispose of. We soon discovered that the dustmen wouldn't take it, they just sort of spread it around a bit. Next we had a grand scheme to use the wire and springs to fasten it all together and flog it to the Tate Gallery as a piece of modern sculpture. However that distinguished art critic Harry Turner said it was about 50 years ahead of its time and our only chance was to get some far-sighted American art-lover to buy it. We gave this project our most serious consideration but decided eventually that we couldn't be a party to sending our Art Treasures abroad. After all, what with the Lane Collection going to Dublin and our piece to America we might well be responsible for creating another Dark Age.

As you can guess time had passed and still we had this mountain of rubble in the garden. We had diminished it slightly by pressing a brick or a few yards of wire on our visitors as a memento or souvenir of their visit, but the trickle of callers had virtually stopped for some reason so that solution was blocked.

I tried dropping one or two in the dustbin, liberally covering them with ashes and household refuse, but after the second week the dustmen took to sorting them out and leaving them in the front garden right where we were trying to persuade some Zinnias to sprout.

My next idea blossomed forth at the office. One of my clerks had lost her library books, left it in the train, the solution appeared obvious. That evening I hurried home, got out some brown paper and string and made up several parcels of bricks and tiles. The very next morning I sallied forth with a parcel under my arm which I duly dumped on the luggage-rack. At Waterloo I hurried off the train leaving behind my parcel. Success! That morning I sat at my desk whilst joyous visions of the lost luggage office, crammed with brown paper parcels flickered through my mind. I imagined them deciding to hold a sale of unclaimed goods, probably expecting to pay Dr Beeching's salary out of the proceeds. Oh, it was a lovely dream.

The next morning I left the house carrying two parcels. Emboldened by my success I was determined to clear the garden in a month. Procedure as before, climb in the carriage, dump the parcels in the rack and head down for a good read. Came Waterloo and I was up and away, but not far. A voice behind stopped me dead.

"Young man you've forgotten your parcels", an aged old bat staggered towards me clutching my bundles. "You young people are so careless these days" she scolded, as she thrust the parcels into my arms.

That was enough, but I hadn't done yet. Outside the gates stood another woman holding yesterday's parcel. Eyes like a hawk, she'd spotted me first and before I could run had deposited her charge on top of the other two. My knees started to sag. She said she'd recognised me as a regular traveller on that train and had thought it would save a lot of trouble if she kept it for me instead of handing it to the authorities.

I now have three bundles of bricks in a filing cabinet at the office and I'm just wondering whether I ought to stick a label on them and send them to the Ministry of Housing, but who knows what furies that move might not loose upon me.

Anyway, if you know of anyone who wants a choice collection of assorted rubble, please let me know.

MachiaVarley.

letters

Inge Hartmann
Judenstrasse No 18
Goettingen.
W.Germany

"I am 20 years old and work in an office as a typist. I'm living with my mother, my father died in the last war and my brother(24) is studying in Hamburg. My hobby is SF and I like this hobby very much. I think it's nice to have contact to fans in other countries. Excuse please my english is not so correct, but I am 4 years out of school and therefore I have forgotten some about this language I like. But I will take a course during this winter because I would like to get a job where I can use english"

++ Inge is active in Gerfandom and would appreciate any fanzines you can spare++

Brian W.Aldiss
24 Marston Street.
Iffley Road
Oxford.

"I was out during the evening to attend the first general meeting in Christ Church of the Speculative Fiction Group. All told some twenty six or seven people turned up to a very successful gathering - including, I was delighted to see, some seven women -I'm all for a female element in fandom. The whole thing has been organised very vigorously by Mark Wigan and Chris Miller. No doubt you'll be hearing of this from Chris."

+++ No doubt is wrong..I am still waiting for the "First day at Oxford" article Chris promised me. I did get a heap of Oxford University mags the other week. No name, so presumably Chris. Hilarious reading just what a student 'should' and 'should not' do. No doubt Chris thinks this will keep me quiet about that article when next we meet. Silly boy! Thanks for the poem Brian, very proud to show it off in Scot.+++

Sid Birchby
1 Gloucester Ave.
Levenshulme
Manchester 19

"I notice you review John Brunner's PUT DOWN THIS EARTH, all about the good old population explosion and you end up by saying that for you the Simple Life is the bunk. You prefer endless progress, new things, new idea. Well now, I see what you mean, of course, and when it comes right down to brass tacks, who doesn't prefer say a new hat or new car to the same old styles that were good enough for grandpa? With most material things, I agree! Let's move on! But progress is at a price, and there are many good old things, habits and customs that have been scrapped along with the bad. When did you last take a cross-London bus-ride for the pleasure of it? Not in a weekday, I'll be bound. Yet, whole essays have been written in the past about the joys of watching the world go by from the top of a bus. What is the flavour of home-baked bread? Where did the old-time dairies go (glass of buttermilk, one penny) What about the pride and joy of the old time craftsmen ..the wheelwrights, potters, turners, blacksmiths?..in turning out good work? etc etc etc. And lastly the big question, with which I leave you. Are you and your friends and acquaintances any happier, do you suppose, than your and their grandparents were? yours retrospectively..Sid"

+++Speaking for my own grandparents(who had five children)I know I am happier than they were. I am happier than my Grandmother who was a very self-pitying woman. My brother(married,two children) is happier than his Grandfather. My brother will not find, as my Grandfather did, that due to his ideas of parental discipline his son could not talk to him even as a grown man. People make pottery a hobby nowadays. Home made bread may have tasted good, but it was drudgery for the woman who had to make it for a large family. What I regret about the dairies was that lovely clean smell...still...unrepentantly yours.....

Dick Schultz
19159 Helen.
Detroit 34
Michigan

"Shirley (Dicks girl-friend) continues to read your Hospital natterings, and points out that there is a serious shortage in this country too. The trouble is that 1)not enough graduate 2)too many of those who do, quit the nursing scene upon marriage. Someone once estimated that if the gooey novels about nursing and doctoring hadn't inoculated practically every nubile female with a lot of baloney about Noble Duty and such like before they even started High School(14 yrs.or so), there would be only a few thousand nurses in the whole states, all 50 of them."

***Well, that ought to cheer up Donald Wollheim who sometimes has to edit these 'nurse novels'. Ought to make him feel a whole lot better, I hope."

Robert Coulson
Route 3
Wabash.
Indiana.

"Talk about"rude cottage walls" reminds me of last weekend when we were driving around Wabash and noticed an old building with a sign on it saying simply,"Violators Will Be Prosecuted". Juanita said she'd heard of these rural sex deviations, but this seemed a bit too much...as I mentioned in FAPA, I fail to see why favourable comments on fandom(in WHY IS A FAN?)should be considered dishonest and unfavorable ones honest. I don't have unfavorable personal experiences with fans; the fans I don't get along with know it and stay away from me(or if they don't, I stay away from them.) We've never had an inconsiderate fan visitor, and we have had inconsiderate mundane visitors(Oh, there is an occasional gripe when we

have our picnic, but from my experience when you get 30 or 40 people together for a party there are always a few minor annoyances--on the whole, our fan visitors are much better behaved than non-fans."

+++In a recent letter from Len Moffat he makes much the same point. I must confess I had not thought of that aspect of the reaction to WHY IS A FAN? But wouldn't you say that it would be natural, when faced with inconsideration, to be more disappointed when the person is a fan? +++

Ken Cheslin
18 New Farm Rd.
Stourbridge.
Worcs.

"Although it is not what could be called the Superb or Magnificent fanzine, it is like trying to compare an apple to an orange..(ghod!)it doesn't run juice at the seams, like, but apples are different to O, and you can't compare them and all that...So, while H is superb, and Cry Excellent, and Orion is sometimes both, either, or less than either, Scottishe is always... "Ethel's". Don't you dare print my ramblin's..they make little sense, even(?) to me."

+++Hoots, mon, as if I would be caring about sense when you are handing out the compliments..like. ""

Alan Dodd
77 Stanstead Rd.
Hoddesdon.
Herts.

"Very interesting to find Brian Aldiss in your letter column. I thought with him being such a famed pro-writer these days fanzines would not get letters from him at all because of the pressure of work. I've got his latest book here the American Beacon book THE MALE RESPONSE -"Every woman in the city was his"- "How a modern Englishman copes with the pagan passions and primitive perversions of today's torrid continent of darkest Africa"- you mean Aldis can find out about all this in Oxford??? Cover is rather interesting -shows a scientist examining a flask in a laboratory while in the foreground a blonde is removing her bra-I've heard of scientific detachment but this is ridiculous!"

+++I think I will let Brian(who is a Good Bloke) answer this himself..should be interesting if he really did learn all about it in Oxford.+++

Colin Freeman
Ward 3
Scotton Banks Hospital
Ripley Rd
Knaresborough.Yorks.

"At first I found it rather surprising that I could and did enjoy your 'shop-talk', until I pinpointed the reason why. You might think that I would have enough of it and would be glad to get away from it. Normally this is true enough, but that's because the usual run of hospital conversation seems to run to a well-worn pattern. Never original, rarely interesting. Nurses and patients are equally guilty. "Do you know how many operations I've had dear?" and "That Sister X is an FOB. I feel sorry for her" Ug! It seems to me there are more bores in a hospital than anywhere else or maybe it just appears that way because it's more difficult to avoid them... I think it is ridiculous to say that, because the world inside a hospital is so narrow and shallow an inmate should be applauded for managing to retain a degree of normality, and even more so if he succeeds in being 'different' and holds on to an outside interest. People 'outside' are so occupied trying not to lose their foothold in the rat race, that they can possibly be excused for leading a humdrum existence and wasting their lives. Pressure of work and family etc. is so great that they have no time to think of anything else. For

a patient in hospital, there is all the time in the world for thinking. There are many patients who sit back and bemoan their fate. They don't deserve any sympathy. Unfortunately they get it from outsiders who don't know better. I have one quarrel with Betty Kujawa's letter. She is talking through her Davy Crockett hat when she decries the Welfare State. With all due respect her arguments are completely illogical. In fact, she is simply using certain special instances to advance a general argument. I agree that the bad ones should be disposed of if possible, but surely not by chopping down the whole tree? Betty should take a look at any large factory or business. She will undoubtedly discover some old soldiers who are taxing their brains to avoid their share of the work, the good workers are subsidizing them. Is the system therefore no good because it permits such parasites to exist? The Welfare State is certainly one of the finest things ever instigated in this country. I should know."

+++Of course most 'outsiders' do not realise that the worst thing you can give a patient is too much sympathy. It takes an especially strong fibre to withstand being constantly told how hard done by you are.+++

Walter A. Willis "Agree with you about ASF. I've stopped trying to
170 U.Newtownwards Rd review them because it sends me into a temper. In
Belfast,N.Ireland. fact I've almost stopped reading them. But NO,IT'S
NOT US! Like you I often re-read the old mags for re-assurance."
+++They tell me that AMAZING is improving these days..hope springs eternal..+++

Jill Adams "You ask do 'we' like Bletherings. Personally I find
54 Cobden Ave. it maddening. All those hints of zines, and I can't
Bitterne Park get to reading them! Don't you take any notice of Mr
Southampton. Tackett, you keep on with Natterings. This kind of
thing I find very interesting. Like you I'd like to know why he's spent 19
years in the Marines and where he's been to in that time. I am unable to
grasp the significance(if any)of the two quotes from THE SINGING SANDS."
+++Well, now you will know Sgt Tackett's reasons. The quotes were part of the
mock Scots V English war in the SFCoL. I was getting my own back at Groves+++

Fred Hunter "Aw..no..don't go and cut out your mailing comments
13 Freefield Rd. from SCOT. I love 'em. Although in most cases I have
Lerwick. not read the zine commented on, I still get a purty
Shetland Isles. good idea of its material from your comments. No
mean achievement, egad!...Your reminiscences trigger off a few of mine own.
F'rinstance, you mentioned urine specimens and I immediately recalled a
practical joker who popped into the sluice-room and substituted limeade in at
least a dozen cases. The nurse doing the tests got all the colours of the
rainbow in the doctored samples and rushed to the Sister before we could stop
her. She, being old in years and wisdom, jaloused that a ward epidemic of
diabetes was slightly unlikely and summoned the up patients. My practical
joking friend cofessed and the Sister rebuked him in the gentle and kindly
manner common to most Ward Sisters. He told me later that he was glad she
stopped when she did 'cos his crutches were beginning to smoulder"
+++The she-dragon type Ward Sister I take it.Ha! he was lucky they only
smouldered.+++

MSgt. LH Tackett USMC
H&HS-1(Comm), MWHG-1
1st MAW, FMFPac.
c/o Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, Calif

"Do all non-fan Americans hate women? I should think a large portion of them do. Since WW1 the advertising media have encouraged the placing of "woman" on the well known pedestal. It takes for more sales of course. The American male subconsciously resents the inferior position he has voluntarily--at the urging of the ad agencies--assumed and as a result he now hates women. Unfortunately most of them are now too henpecked to do anything about it. You have been tuned to the Iwakuni program discussing tonight social life among the Americans. Next week Dr Tackett will dissect American women. Won't you join him? Can I inject a comment or two into the discussion you and Betty are having concerning my remarks? I think I have mentioned this before(See, Tackett, you ought to keep files) But I am not entirely the opponent of the Welfare State. God knows we could use a bit more of it in the states since all out private enterprise has just about priced everything beyond the reach of such poor slobs as I. But Betty is quite right about those who can but won't work. Let them starve. An empty belly is an excellent re-education program. No, I am not advocating the abandonment of welfare measures for the unemployed, but a tightening of the machinery of relief. As for Betty's complaint about illegitimate children being supported by the state--someone must look after them. Quite agree on F&SF, or that issue anyway, it was a stinker. I think it comes to this. We have read so blasted much stf that we have become surfeited with it. Or at least with so much of the pap that passes for stf these days. Yes, it must be the latter for I still find the old sense of wonder running high whenever I re-read some of the classics from ASTOUNDING'S golden age."

+++Over here, the payment of unemployment benefit will be withheld if you refuse to accept a suitable job. The catch is suitable. If you are a labourer and the Employment Bureau has plenty labouring jobs to offer you, this you must accept. However, if you are a banker, and there are no banking vacancies then you cannot be forced to take a labouring job, but must be paid benefit.+++

Now comes the time for some chomping reluctant as I am to do so...LEN MOFFATT writes.. "I'm sure that all non-fan Americans do not hate women. Harry's account dealt with just one situation, in one hospital. I've seen the types he mentioned, as hospital visitors and in other circumstances, but doubt if there is any one "typical" type of American womanhood. Like, there are female relations, and female relations...some can be a pain in the...er...neck, and some are wonderful persons. Just like all over the world, folks."

RICK SNEARY writes....Maybe I'm getting to know it better, but Bletherings is making more sense, and thus more interesting. The Aldiss letter should be of interest to many LA fans because of the reference to the Other-World of Bramwell Bronte. One of the local fans started building a Otherworld with bits from sf and fantasy and much personal invention. A "Faffard and Gray Mouser" type world with a vast complex of states and governments. This somewhat introverted genius has not cut himself off from the rest of the world but invited it in, or at least most of his friends. Now a good percentage of the younger local fans are someway connected with the world of Coventry"

+++ALL COMMENTS ON INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTORS TO SCOT ARE PASSED ON TO THEM AND ARE GRATEFULLY RECEIVED+++

MARINATING

ROY TACKETT

What makes a man join the regular military service, you ask. It is, indeed, a perplexing question and I would probably be one of the first to agree that no one in his right mind would think of making it a career. And yet I have. I can't say that I've enjoyed it but I've stuck with it. Why?

My first enlistment doesn't count, of course. The reasons for that should be obvious. When one is 17 and there is a great war no other explanation for joining the service is needed. It is the period after the war that calls for explanation. It isn't, in my case anyway, too easy to explain.

I was released from the Marines in 1945 along with some ten million other people and it would seem that most of the ten million had the same idea--go back to school. I was quite eager to go on with my education for, although I had finished high school prior to enlisting, I felt that college was an absolute necessity. Particularly since I had my eyes fixed on a career in physics.

I applied to the Veterans Administration for my certificate of eligibility immediately after I received my discharge but that agency was swamped so it took more than two months for the piece of paper which guaranteed that I was a bona-fide veteran and therefore eligible for education under the GI bill to arrive.

These two and a half months were a period of uncertainty. It was almost impossible to get a job since no employer wanted to take on a man who might dash off at any moment to the ivy-tangled portals of some university. I did find a bit of part-time work but for the most part lived off my mustering-out pay.

On that glorious day when the postman finally deposited the long awaited letter from the VA in my box I packed my bag and took the first bus to Denver where, jammed sardinelike with several thousand other eager young veterans, I gleefully enrolled at the University.

DU was overflowing with students as were all the other schools at that time. Lodgings were difficult to find and I finally came up with a rather shabby room some six miles from the university. This involved getting up quite early in the morning to catch a bus to school for my first class but I didn't mind that since I was accustomed to getting up in the general vicinity of 5:30am. (A quite indecent hour for anyone to get up, by the way.) I was filled with fire and a desire to learn. I could picture the vast and weighty tomes waiting to have

their covers opened so that they could engulf me with their knowledge.

The fire was rather quickly quenched. The story was the same in each class. A harried instructor would gaze at the upturned shiny faces in his closely packed classroom and wearily write a list of books on the board. "There are," he would say, "the books you need for this course. I do not know where you are going to get them. They haven't been printed since before the war and are not available at the university book store. You may be able to find them in some of the downtown bookstores but I doubt it." This sort of thing is not at all encouraging to the eager young student.

After about three days of this I decided that the time had come for a consultation with myself. I settled back in my moth-eaten chair, shifted a bit to remove the spring that was gouging into the middle of my back and, looking over my ratty surroundings, took stock. It was, I decided, one hell of a situation. The mustering out pay was about gone and with the VA machinery bogged down under the load it was uncertain when the first school check would appear. A couple of students who had enrolled during the previous semester had informed me that the checks were running two to three months late.

On top of this my education didn't seem to be progressing very well at all. I had made the rounds of the bookshops but text books were not to be had. It was, in fact, something of an occasion if one could come up with a notebook and a pencil.

I was almost broke with the possibility of future financing somewhat uncertain. I was also disgusted with the situation at the school. The classes were over-crowded and the instruction so far had consisted entirely of lectures droned out by an unhappy instructor. Without books there was little likelihood of actually learning anything in class. I could, I thought, get a job of sorts to take care of the financial situation but the problem of school itself would not be solved so easily. I could probably get by but I wanted knowledge, not just a diploma. What to do?

I took a long range view of it and decided that in four years the crowd would be out of the way and the schools should be back to a more or less normal program. And what was I going to do in the intervening four years? The answer to that one seemed obvious. The next day I disenrolled myself from school, checked in at the local recruiting station, raised my right hand and swore to uphold the Constitution for the next four years. My uniform felt good and the calm of my new duty station was a welcome relief after my three hectic months as a civilian. That was 1946.

In 1950 when my enlistment expired I was still single, a Staff Sergeant with an assortment of privileges denied the lower ranks, and more than enough money to take care of my needs. The living was easy so I took the line of least resistance. It was easier to sign on for six more years than to make the shift to civilian life.

In 1956 when the time for decision once more arrived my outlook was very

different. I had acquired a wife and daughter. The living was no longer easy and the military life was beginning to wear on the nerves.

But in 1956 I was 31 years old. Too old to start back to school or to attempt, at that time, a new start in civilian life. After more than 13 years of it soldiering was all I knew and it was quite apparent that I wasn't fitted for a civilian occupation.

The decision was easy to make. One more enlistment would give me enough service to retire and insure myself an income of sorts. Also by re-enlisting I could get a retraining assignment. I might be too old for civilian schools but not for the service schools. I could, in the time remaining, train myself into a specialty that would be useful in civilian life as well as in the service. So I re-enlisted and asked for assignment to electronics training.

So there you have my reasons for regular military service. No great dedication or anything like that I'm afraid. It's just that for the first few years it was easier to drift than to do anything else. It wasn't a bad life and, not having any civilian ties, I wasn't particularly ambitious. When I did finally take on some obligations and responsibilities it was too late to do anything but stick it out. The last eight or nine years haven't been particularly pleasant ones but they have enabled me to make up for the wasted years.

And that's one man's reasons for spending his life in the service, Ethel. Well, you asked for it.

Roy Tackett.

Iwakuni, Japan, October 1961.

+++++

Taking Mescaline.

by Brian W. Aldiss

This was to have been
It!
The ascension into clean
Worlds where once angels flew,
Yogis swan, symbols writhed, and
Aldous Huxley elucidated the Cosmic Navel.
I downed the powder with clear water
And trepidation,
Then sat - silent room, night, mind -
Awaiting translation

This should happen to
Me!
I who needed a short cut through
Disciplines to whatever Nirvanah -
Biochemical but not less genuine
For that, I stomached neither pill
Nor vision, lost beyond redemption.
The duration
Of the hollow night was filled up by
Sounds of regurgitation.

+++++

WARBLINGS

Walter
A
Wittis



I REMEMBER ME.....

Well, as I was saying, I wrote this column for Quandry, calling it 'The Harp That Once or Twice' because I thought its future was doubtful: but taking as much trouble over that first instalment as if I knew how important it was going to be. I mailed it on 22nd January, 1951, and three months later I was writing to Lee:

Letter section was more interesting to me than usual this time. I'd been a bit worried about how THTOOT would go over—you never say anything about it in your letters and for all I knew you were disgusted with it—but it seems to have been received quite well. Ghod bless Joe Kennedy. Not only does he say the thing is good, but he implies that anyone who doesn't agree is a bit stupid. What more could you ask?

I notice from the rest of this letter that I had by now joined Fapa, or rather been inducted into it. Out of idle curiosity, I had scrawled a note in a sample copy of Slant to Harry Warner asking for the dope about it. Next thing I knew I had got a letter from Burbee notifying me I was a member and that the current mailing was on its way. Apparently Bob Tucker had paid my subscription knowing the exchange difficulties British fans were faced with at that time. I was a bit taken aback by this unexpected extension of my publishing activities since I didn't have a duplicator, but with the help of Hoffman and later McCain and Vick I kept up my activity requirements by contributing to existing Fapa-zines. When I eventually retired from Fapa in 1958 GMCarr pointed to the small number of issues of my Papazine Pamphrey and suggested I wouldn't be missed. However true that may have been, the fact was that I was active in Fapa before and outside Pamphrey.

Lee took to heart the implied rebuke in my letter:

Lemme see now, yes, I printed what Redd Boggs said about HARP in No 10. And

he seems to have voiced the general opinion of my readers. At least he's summed up what they've said, pretty well and he's put what I say into words. Namely in the lines: "Walt Willis is easily the fan find of the year, and you're lucky yo snare him as a columnist." Only it was you found me. I was sitting home one day when a SLANT came. I was overjoyed at the fact that you wanted to trade such a lovely magazine for poor miserable li'l Quandry. Then I realised that you probably had never seen a copy..only seen one of my ads and fallen for it. Then I read SLANT and I sat me down and tried my best to write you a sufficiently intelligent letter to merit a reply. Apparently you received it on a slow day for I did get an answer. And wot an answer! Where I had daringly ventured that you just might sometime mebbe find it in you to write a li'l bit of something for Quandry please? you offered to do a column! So I can't claim to have found you.. you found me or something..but regardless, we are both found so now Q and I are thriving happily on the egoboo that comes to the ed of the zine with HARP in't. You make me so happy I could sit here (I sit cross-legged on the bed to type) and die from sheer ecstasy...with a smile on my face..

She ended on a more cryptic note:

Hey, Walt, how are you on keeping secrets? I mean really hanging on to one for a few long months...not telling a soul....?

You will no doubt be thinking I was pretty stupid not to have guessed what the secret was--I mean, what male fan would sit cross-legged on a bed to type---but you haven't heard anything yet. I can be much stupider than that without even trying. Why, three months before, in February 1951, seven months before the secret was detonated in front of an astonished Tucker at the Nolacon, Lee Hoffman had sent me a Valentine. It was a picture of a squirrel with the legend "You're nutty but nice", and so inured was I by now to the eccentricities of fans that I accepted it quite casually as a mere fannish pleasantry. Finally, Lee had, almost literally, to draw me a diagram. She never actually told me she was a girl: she just sent me a photograph and let me draw my own conclusion. Looking back on it now, it's uncanny to see the way Lee and I were almost unconsciously building Quandry for its destiny as the first Anglo-American fan-zine. The next important step was all Lee's own idea:

It one day occurred to me that you people can't just reach into your pockets and pull out a dime to stuff into an envelope and send to me over Quandry. Subsequently I stopped short and said to myself, "Hoffman, these fans outside of the US can't just reach into their pockets and pull out a dime to stuff into an envelope and send to you." "True," I replied thoughtfully. "Well," sez I, "Are you trying to be a professional amateur publisher or do you do this for the fun of it?" "Wot do you think?" I asked me sarcastically. "Which means no' to you? A measly li'l dime or a letter from somebody?" I question further. "W-e-e-e-l-l-l," I look longingly toward an ad for some grease..which shows beautiful golden chicken frying in full colour, and reply, "A letter." "So?" asks I. "So," sez I. So from now on overseas fans can have Q for a letter or note of acknowledgement per issue.

At that time Q had a circulation of 93, only two of whom were in England. And neither of those two were leading fans; they were Ken Johnston of Liverpool and Pete Ridley of London. But after my London Convention reports British fandom took advantage of Lee's offer and swarmed aboard the Quandry bandwagon. However all that was still to come. Slant was still the main thing with me and I was pushing it into all sorts of odd corners. I had read a sf poem in The Listener by Robert Conquest, and sent him a copy care of the BBC. He replied with a letter of comment and a subscription. I was infiltrating with a character in London called Borrow who produced a printed little-magazine called The Glass. I wrote for it an introduction to sf and fandom especially aimed at the highbrow mentality, which Ethel might think worth publishing as an appendix to this. And I had sent a copy of Slant to somebody called MacGregor in Aberdeen, who had had an interesting letter in New Worlds. This seed seemed to have fallen on stony ground, but it eventually burgeoned into the following correspondence:

Dear Walter,

I got a copy of SLANT about eight months ago and have finally read it. What do you mean, an insult? I have ASFs of much earlier date which I haven't read. All in good time. At any rate I liked SLANT (I didn't read the fiction, of course.) Is it still alive? If it is, you will probably react to that as I did when someone asked me if I had anything published yet. Violently. At any rate, I enclose a PO of convenient denomination and would like to see SLANT, please...I promise to read it before the end of 1951. If you would like some fiction for this magazine which may and may not exist, I have a 500,000 word novel I could let you have. But I had better warn you that I'd have to revise it first, and it would be a little longer after that. Recently Planet, knowing no better, sent back a story for a minor alteration. I added ten thousand words. That, I trust, learned them.

yours sincerely

James Macgregor(J.T.M'INTOSH)

Dear James,

Thanks for your letter and the sub. And of course for the very nice ploy in proauthorship, but it wasn't really necessary. We know you. You wrote THE CURFEW TOLLS in ASF 1950/12 and you have a story coming up in NEW WORLDS. But I did not know that you were the Macgregor who had the letter in the October '49 issue which we thought interesting enough to be from a potential subscriber. Nice to see the prognostication fulfilled even after such a long time. About TCT, now. I remembered that story and I'm glad to meet the author. Not just because it was a very enjoyable yarn, though it was, but because I wanted to query this O & S business. This I do with the greatest reluctance, since I like this sort of twist, but here it didn't seem to have any logical connection with the plot. Besides it seems a most curious way to go about selecting people. On the most severely practical grounds, how about the several hundreds of millions of people who write their names with an ideographic 'alphabet?' However it's a small point and the story was done well enough to make me quite willing to suspend my disbelief. Thanks again for writing. Oh, and about that novel: sure, send it along and we'll serialise it if it's any good. Should be able to get

it into only about 500 instalments....Well, it was good enough for Dickens!
Cordially.

Dear Walter,

Yes, you have a very nice zine. But how could anyone say a word against it when he thinks of all the effort it must take? Ploy in proauthorship, indeed... I shall confine myself to remarking that if I had really been plying I should certainly have mentioned my ten stories coming (as of January 1) in US and British magazines. However, I now have. As for O & S... At first, never having had a high opinion of TCT, I was going to let it pass. But on consideration I find I am quite prepared to defend it. In the first place, I don't think the ideographic alphabet question matters much. An author can always cover himself in matters like this. He can explain in tedious detail exactly what was done in all the out-of-the-ordinary cases. But then he has a big unwieldy story which doth protest too much. No, I wanted some method of random selection, and this is never easy. In fact, I am inclined to think it's never possible. Maybe you know some of the classic cases. An oatmeal manufacturer, on the basis of a survey of three pages on the London telephone directory, found a colossal consumption of oatmeal and publicised it. Random selection? No. He omitted to mention that he took his three pages from the Mac section. Another case in Aberdeen not long ago had doctors tearing their hair. There was an upstairs ward and a downstairs ward in the maternity hospital. Over a period deaths, length of convalescence and percentage of stillborn babies were incredibly low in the upstairs ward compared with the other. Theoreticians got busy. Had atmospheric pressure something to do with it? Was there a psychological factor? Again no. Someone found out that the porter had been directing the cases who could walk upstairs and those who were carried in filled the downstairs ward. Enough to upset the random selection completely. So when I wanted a method of selection from names (to include all families as units) I hit on this one. Alphabetical order is not good. You start off with the Aarons and Aaronsons and Abrahams. At various other points you get nothing but Macs and O'somethings. On the other hand, while the OS method means that your first group includes all the Stones (possibly biasing your selection) the fact that the Stones have absolutely nothing to do with the Carsons and the Costers tends to remove the bias. Though you have a lot of 'sons', there is no bias in this suffix that I can see. No, frequently I have to admit that if I were writing a story again I'd do it very differently. But on this point I stand firm... My novel is practically on the way to you. Only I hope you don't mind if I let a few other magazines see it first. GALAXY, perhaps, and ASF....

yours sincerely. Jim.

I was making a lot of new contacts in America by now--Max Keasler, Duggie Fisher GMCarr--but our letters don't seem to be of either intrinsic or historical interest so I've ruthlessly consigned them to oblivion lest these memoirs get so long that I never catch up with them, or ever gradually lose ground. There was also Ed Noble, the one who changed his address so many times that Bob Shaw called him "the roamingest Noble of them all". He and I were bound by a bond of fellow feeling since Sam Merwin had castigated our fanzines in his review column. I

thought myself specially unfortunate because when I had written a letter of mild expostulation he had quoted parts of it as an excuse to change his reviewing system to one in which he merely listed most of the fanzines without comment. Actually the real reason was that he couldn't be bothered to read them--he admitted when he left the TWS/SS editorship that he hadn't even read most of the ones he did review--but it worried me that I should get the blame. My problem was to protest my innocence in such a way that Merwin would print it, so I conceived the idea of writing an article called "The Mind of Samuel Merwin". Ostensibly it was a psychological analysis of Merwin based on his personalised writing, but worked in with it was this episode of the reviews I figured Merwin would hardly resist reading an article like that and that prima donna that he was he might even refer to it. Curiously enough this strategy worked. He devoted a whole page or so to it, quoting copiously just the bits I had wanted him to. I felt quite Machiavellian.

But now everything was being overshadowed by the forthcoming London Convention, the Festival Convention, the first real International Convention to be held this side of the water. There was only one man who made it really worthy of that title and the letter from him I got that Spring is as good a way to end this instalment as it was to presage that climatic convention.

6 Mar 51

Dear Wally the Jolly

I just received SLANT No 5, roared over the departments, and find your fannouncement on the hacoover not to be ignored. I give you fair warning: don't come to the Loncon! Because I shall be there, and I weigh 202 pounds in my stalking feet (or hadn't you heard I've become a detective)--and if you dare show your face in my presence, I warn you that as sure as God made little green apples, little green fen, and little green Irishmen, I shall give you the most awful thumping on the back out of sheer exuberant enthusiastic ebullient enthusiasm for the unadulterated pleasure that your treasure of a fannag brings to me! I trust I have made my intentions clear? Stf be with you and yours, far friend, and I look forward to soon setting foot on your shores--and hand on your back in appreciation.

with every good wish.

Forry.

Walter A. Willis.

DO NOT FORGET-----THERE IS STILL TIME TO
SUPPORT THE WILLIS FUND.

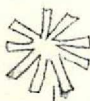
Donations to: Larry Shaw, 16 Grant Place, Staten Island, 6 New York

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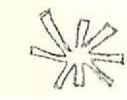
Arthur Thomson, 17 Brockham House, Brockham Drive, London SW2.

every mickle maks' a muckle.....

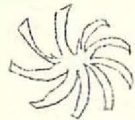
ODD ODES
I NEVER
QUITE.....




Yngvi Is A Louse
a cry of great renown
what I want to know is
who let Courtney drown?




Sounds of thunder
cries of woe
watch those Atomic missiles go



Mad scientist
with beautiful daughter
presses button
didn't oughter
mighty bang and blinding light
blows mad scientist out of sight
too bad



It's easy, they said
it's not -
I'm dead



By
Arthur Thomson

Science Fiction
causes friction
in the diction-
well
you say
SFCoL

Rasczaks Roughnecks
all in a line
'Pouff' went Rasczak
now there are nine

Little alien
soft and round
Purple putrescent mound

Take me to your Leader
hear the E.T. say
pointing raygun at you
better show the way



Gieger, Gieger on the wall
what's the fallout, tell me all
is the world still pure and fair
or does radiation fill the air?

Bacover quotes are mighty fine
but why oh why
does he never use mine

Bems and Monsters
blood and gore
Conan tales are such a bore

Shambling along with form grotesque
Radiation mutation is NOT picturesque

The rockets rise
with sounds of thunder
but where oh where
is my sense of wonder

Rejection slips
those things of dread
I've a suitcase full
beneath the bed

Starship trooper
tell me true
does the vote
mean so much to you?

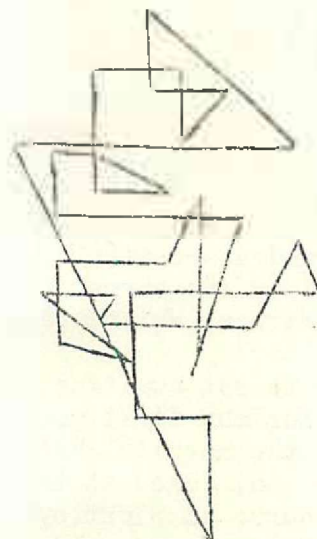
Conventions --they may
one day
will be passe

Sing a song of deadwood
erratic though they are
sing a song of Deadwood
each a shining star

I believe in Fairies
Trolls and Goblins too
I believe in Elves and Gnomes
why don't I believe in you

in an earlier fanning age
Zapguns once were all the rage
Plonkers now are to the fore
you just don't see zaps anymore

natterings



ethel lindsay

New Year's Day 1940...and I was on my way to the Dundee Royal Infirmary to train to be a nurse. This Infirmary had a song which the probationer nurses used to sing:

"A Nurse I thought I would like to be
So I took myself to Bonnie Dundee
To the place on the Hill I did apply
Affectionately known as the DRI
They gave me a cap and an apron, oh my!
I felt most important - I don't know why
By nighttime I almost was ready to die
My feet were so sore at the DRI."

to the tune of 'WI' A 100 PIPERS.

The DRI was fortunate in the site chosen by its Victorian builders: at the top of a steep hill and facing a rolling park. Behind was a row of large stone houses admirably fitted to be utilised for staff quarters as the former owners moved out. In one of these houses was the Preliminary Training School for Nurses known as the PTS. Everything in hospital is soon reduced to initials. Accompanied by my Mother and Aunt I headed for this destination; I had to report in by 6pm, with a last, lingering look behind me, I did so. I was greeted by the Sister Tutor Miss Divens, a small plump woman with an easy-going manner. After showing me my bedroom, she ushered me into the sitting-room. There, sitting awkwardly on chairs wearing timidly frozen smiles, were some of the 12 girls who comprised my PTS and who were to share the next four years with me. We talked little beyond introductions till one, Meikle arrived and immediately recognised a school-mate in another named Stewart. It was not hospital etiquette (of which we were to hear much) to use Christian names. The reason given being that we might forget on the wards and commit the solecism of letting a patient know a nurse's Christian name. With Meikle's arrival the ice was broken and we chattered of the various things we expected to happen to us.

Some had older relatives already through the hospital, anyone who knew of the routine was listened to with respect. We learnt that we should stay in the school all week for lectures, but go on the wards at weekends. Gradually I began to put names to the faces - Meikle, round-faced and bonny with a careless confidence. Stewart, rather shy till you knew her better and then decided sly should be the word. Massie, Montgomery, Guthrie, Easson, all evidently sharing my nervousness. Lastly in came Cummings, and from the minute I saw her I felt protective and admiring. Tall and raw-boned; with a face like a kindly horse, a thick Dundee accent (all words like pie-tie were pronounced peh-teh, harshly) and filled by the shyness which, when genuine, can cause a nurse endless torture. Watson, Whitton, Thomson and Lindsay.

There we sat awaiting our fate, which was Miss Divens - to take us across the road for our first meal in the dining room. This was situated in the middle of the hospital halfway down a long corridor which lead off to the wards at either end. Once at the doorway you had to look both ways. Should there be a senior nurse in sight (even if senior by only a month) you had to wait to let her in first. Many would wave you on, but some little madams wouldn't. If you were rash enough to go ahead you would be berated publicly and there was no answering back. I have seen this happen and listened to the unfortunate nurse be told that she had the manners of a pig and would never make a nurse! This matter of precedence was part of the hospital etiquette never given to us officially, but handed down from nurse to nurse.

Each grade sat at their own table: the PTS at a large table in the corner and there we arrived thankful to be on our own. We watched carefully as the others hurried in. The Staff Nurses to their own large table, the first year pros at another, whilst the 3rd year nurses were scattered around small tables. Over in the opposite corner, looking odd to our eyes, were the Midwifery Pupils

On our return to school we encountered our uniforms. A pink dress almost ankle length, large stiffly starched white apron (mine almost went round twice) and a pink belt that appeared to be made of iron. Perched on our heads were small caps requiring practise to keep in place. These we would wear till we passed our Preliminary exams, then we would be given a white belt. In our 2nd year we would be given a white stripe to sew on our sleeves; in our 3rd year we would be promoted to a striped dress, lastly in our 4th year we would be given the proud dress of grey. Those awesome beings, the Sisters, wore navy blue.

My room-mate was Whitton who came from nearby Arbroath, had never been away from home or had a job before. She appeared to be alarmingly light-headed to me, although I envied her sunny belief that too much would not be expected of her. I discovered that she was well-read, and took that comforting thought to bed with me at 10pm lights out.

Next day we saw the breakfast routine. After the meal a Sister would take the roll-call, at the end of which she called out the changes. Nurse Brown to Ward 4... Nurse Green to Night-duty... Nurse Smith to Ward 13. We noticed that some greeted their changes with smiles and others with looks of despair. Then

back to school and into the world of Anatomy, Physiology, Dietetics, Preliminary Nursing, and (ugh) Hygiene. The last seemed to be mainly about drains and sewage farms. We quickly found Miss Divens a lazy Tutor who read all her lectures from the book. This we took down in our notebooks and then copied them carefully into large lecture books. No doubt the repetition helped to get some facts into our noddles, but we often had great difficulty in keeping awake. We were told however by the knowledgeable ones to cherish Miss Divens whilst we had her; 'Emma', the senior Sister Tutor was, they said, a fiend incarnate!

The lectures were enlivened by some practical nursing - how to make poultices (twelve of us round the kitchen table busily stirring revolting masses of oatmeal) - and how to make a bed properly. The hospital corner we made ad nauseam, and we covered each other with exotic bandages. When short of a model you practised on your own leg.

Then came the weekend: we were assigned our wards and the junior nurse from each collected us. Mine urged me to hurry, hurry. Speeding along the corridor behind her I quaked internally - "Here it comes!" was my most rational thought. The ward was a Female Surgical one of 36 beds. I was hurried in and presented to the Staff Nurse, a tall woman with a severe frown. "Go round the beds with Nurse" I was bade and, pulling off our cuffs, we began. Bed-making, bed-making in the DRI it went on forever, the beds were never tidy enough to suit any Sister I worked under. This was the real thing: I kept my head down, my eyes fixed firmly on the nurse opposite and copied her as quickly as I could. Quickness: that is what I remember most of those first moments. Everyone was quite literally tearing around with an intent look; the ward must be tidy before Sister arrived. Another tall woman! I seemed to lose another couple of inches; she cast a cold eye over me and observed, "I hope you are a worker"

I was told to take the soiled linen to the sluice and there I found my hiding-place. I saw piles of linen to be sluiced, enormous mounds of basins, bottles and gallipots to be washed. I sank my arms up to the elbows in soapy water and cleaned like a demon. I found that as long as I stayed there coping with the endless pile I was left in peace. Everyone was only too glad to see someone who didn't hang around asking what to do next, but got on with the most disliked task in the ward - the sluicing! Soiled linen in hospital is an ever-present chore, I quickly learnt the best way to remove all sorts of stains. Hold the sheet under a tap of cold rushing water and scrub heartily with a hard brush. Only the worst needs to be removed, the laundry does the rest.

It must have been my second weekend there that I attracted Sister's eye. She did not like the way I made a bed - the corner was not right. Do it again; and again, and again, - under her eagle eye. She let me stop at the ninth try and with dire threats against any PTS carelessness stalked off leaving me limp with fear. Of what was I afraid? Quite simply that I would be thrown out, that I would not be good enough. Looking back on that 17 yr old I cannot understand why I became so passionately set on this life, why I would rather have died than failed, why I would never complain when I went home.

I cannot say it was a sense of vocation: I have far more compassion now than I had then. But the hospital world closed over my head and all its assumptions were my assumptions. Of course I was requiring discipline - I saw it meted out on all sides. Naturally I should be made to feel humble, I was a junior wasn't I! There were things that were just not done, like cheeking someone senior. It was a tough life with no room for the self-pitying. The only relief was the indulging of the constant grumbling that echoed through every conversation. It was a challenge - get through this and you will have earned your reward-you too will be a DRI trained nurse. I would like to think it was the challenge I accepted.

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I should very much like to publish Walt's introduction to sf in this issue, but this is Page 24 and time to call a halt. I hope to run it in the next issue as I think it is of general interest.

The Berkeley post-mailing arrived and was found to be full of goodies. Of course there is George Spencer who thinks we British are "painfully subservient both cuturally and militarily to the United States". I don't give two hoots about the militarily part of it..but culturally? I wonder if this is really true, ~~taking~~ the average American as against the average Britisher.

Of course it depends upon what George means as culture. True our pop music, our slang, our entertainment world follows slavishly the American pattern, but would this be what George means by culture? This is a word with two meanings:
a)The total intellectual and institutional heritage of a civilisation
b)Intellectual refinement.

As far as the first is concerned we both have a very varied and changing culture. We both have many different social ways integrated into the whole. Neither would I say painfully subservient to the other.

When we come to the second meaning, I cannot grant that either. It is based on the educational system, and much as ours requires improving I do not think it inferior to that of the United States.
Come now, George, would you like to argue this out with me? With a few facts to back up your statement?

I regret I do not have the space to go into every interesting point raised by the Berkeley post-mailing. I wonder which post-mailing was the bigger after all? In spite of all that Britons Awake! from Bruce, I have the feeling that the Donaho 51 page Viper will have tipped the balance away from us.

Och well..

Ethel.